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Labour Force, Australia

Headline estimates of employment, unemployment, underemployment, participation and hours worked from the monthly Labour Force Survey

Reference period February 2022

Released 17/03/2022

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Key statistics

Seasonally adjusted estimates for February 2022:

- unemployment rate fell to 4.0%.
- participation rate increased to 66.4%.
- employment increased to 13,372,000.

- employment to population ratio increased to 63.8%.
- underemployment rate decreased to 6.6%.
- monthly hours worked increased by 149 million hours.

	Jan-2022	Feb-2022	Monthly change	Monthly change (%)	Yearly change	Yearly change (%)
Seasonally adjusted						
Employed people	13,294,600	13,372,000	77,400	0.6%	395,400	3.0%
Unemployed people	581,800	563,300	-18,500	-3.2%	-244,800	-30.3%
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.0%	-0.2 pts	na	-1.8 pts	na
Underemployment rate	6.7%	6.6%	-0.1 pts	na	-1.8 pts	na
Participation rate	66.2%	66.4%	0.2 pts	na	0.4 pts	na
Monthly hours worked in all jobs	1,665 million	1,813 million	149 million	8.9%	49 million	2.8%

Estimates of changes throughout this release are calculated using un-rounded level estimates and may be different from, but are more accurate than, movements obtained from the rounded level estimates.

Survey impacts and changes

Articles and other information

The ABS has again included more detailed information given the interest in understanding:

- hours worked
- people who were not employed but indicated they were attached to a job

This detailed information can be found in:

- [Insights into hours worked, February 2022 \(/articles/insights-hours-worked-february-2022\)](/articles/insights-hours-worked-february-2022)
- [Insights into job attachment during the pandemic, February 2022 \(/articles/insights-job-attachment-during-pandemic-february-2022\)](/articles/insights-job-attachment-during-pandemic-february-2022)

For a list of previously published LFS articles, see the [Article archive \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-)

[release#article-archive](#)).

The ABS is also continuing to include data cubes EM2a and EM2b in this release. These two data cubes are usually only released in [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](#), but will continue to be released in the headline release over the coming months, to enable more detailed analysis of changes in hours worked and the reasons that people are working reduced or no hours.

Additional spreadsheets and pivot tables are published in [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](#) one week after this release, while longitudinal labour force microdata are released in the ABS DataLab, on 24 March 2022 (see [Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](#)).

Quarterly rebenchmarking of labour force statistics

The ABS has revised the original Labour Force series from July 2020 to reflect the latest available preliminary and final estimates of the Estimated Resident Population. This quarterly process ensures that the Labour Force series promptly reflect any change in population trends and minimises the size of revisions that can occur when the series are rebenchmarking following each Census of Population and Housing.

In response to COVID-19 related changes in travel, the ABS has been revising preliminary Net Overseas Migration estimates more frequently. Net Overseas Migration estimates are a component of population estimates, from which Labour Force benchmarks are produced. These revisions have been incorporated into the quarterly rebenchmarking revisions. For more information, please refer to '[Net Overseas Migration revisions in Labour Force benchmarks during COVID-19 \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2020#covid-19-impacts-and-changes\)](#)'.

The usual resident civilian population in December 2021 was revised up by around 0.13% (around 28,100 people).

Revisions to original series also result in revisions to seasonally adjusted series.

Seasonal adjustment and trend estimates

In the April 2020 Labour Force release, the ABS advised that the method used to produce

seasonally adjusted estimates would be changed from the 'concurrent' method to the 'forward factors' method, during the COVID-19 period. The forward factors approach is better suited to managing large movements at the end point of series and ensures that large movements do not have a disproportionate influence on the seasonal factors.

Given the large movements in the labour market during the COVID-19 period and the continuing use of a forward factors approach to seasonal adjustment, the ABS will be undertaking an 'Extraordinary Annual Series Review' of Labour Force series, ahead of the release of April 2022 data (on 19 May 2022). The outcome of this process will be summarised in a future release.

Survey response and timeline - Floods in February

The February Labour Force Survey was run in respect of the two weeks from Sunday 30 January to Saturday 12 February, and collected over the period from Sunday 6 February to Saturday 26 February.

Large scale floods in Queensland and New South Wales in late February occurred after the February survey reference period and towards the end of the data collection phase. Quality assurance undertaken by the ABS confirmed floods did not impact February Labour Force statistics.

Looking ahead to March, the disruption to survey enumeration activities increased with the severity of flooding and their major impact on the affected communities in Queensland and New South Wales. The ABS will undertake additional quality assurance to ensure that any impact on state and national estimates is minimised, though there may be some localised impacts on detailed regional estimates in March.

For a recent example of where the ABS has undertaken quality assurance around a major disaster, please refer to '[Assessing the impact of the bushfires on labour force statistics \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jan-2020#labour-force-commentary-january-2020\)](#)' in the January 2020 release (in February 2020).

The ABS would like to thank Australians for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time, given how critically important this information is.

Reference and Enumeration Dates

Publication	Start of Reference Week	End of Reference Week	Start of Enumeration	End of Enumeration
January 2022	2nd January 2022	15th January 2022	9th January 2022	29th January 2022

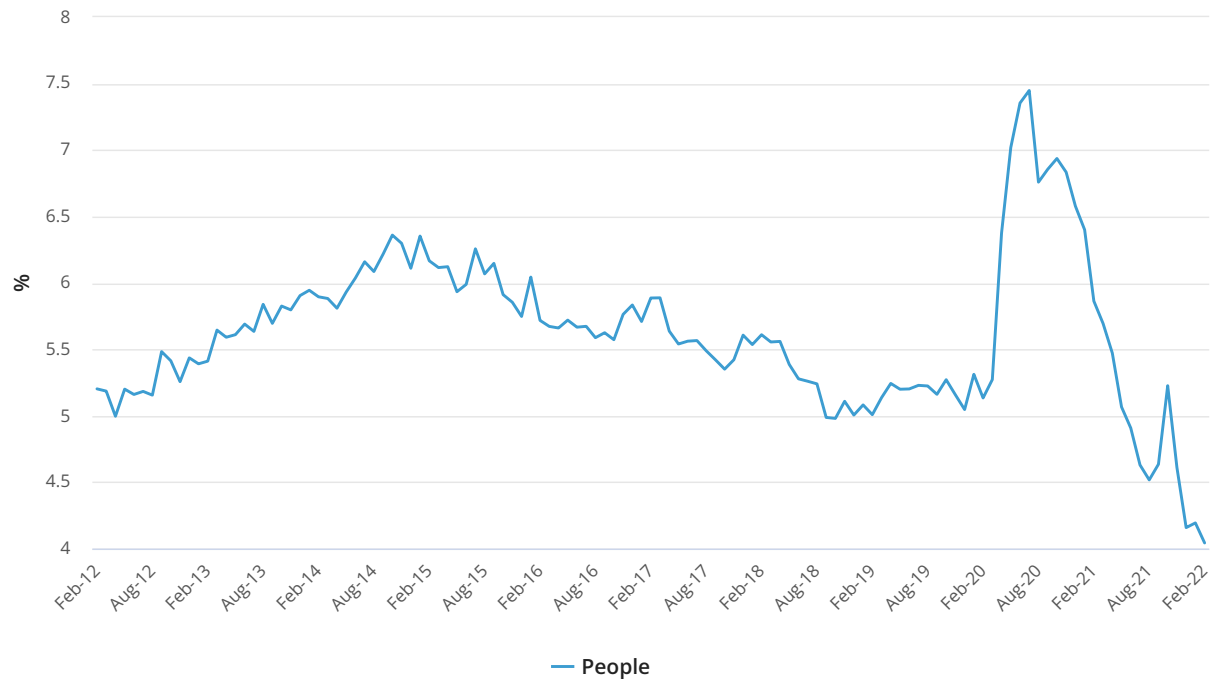
Publication	Start of Reference Week	End of Reference Week	Start of Enumeration	End of Enumeration
February 2022	30th January 2022	12th February 2022	6th February 2022	26th February 2022
March 2022	27th February 2022	12th March 2022	6th March 2022	26th March 2022
April 2022	3rd April 2022	16th April 2022	10th April 2022	30th April 2022
May 2022	1st May 2022	14th May 2022	8th May 2022	28th May 2022
June 2022	29th May 2022	11th June 2022	5th June 2022	25th June 2022

Unemployment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022:

- unemployment rate fell to 4.0%.
- unemployment rate was 1.2 pts below March 2020.
- unemployed people decreased by 18,500 to 563,300.
- unemployed people was 159,900 lower than March 2020.
- youth unemployment rate increased by 0.3 pts to 9.3%.
- youth unemployment rate was 2.3 pts lower than March 2020.

Unemployment rate, Seasonally adjusted



Employment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022:

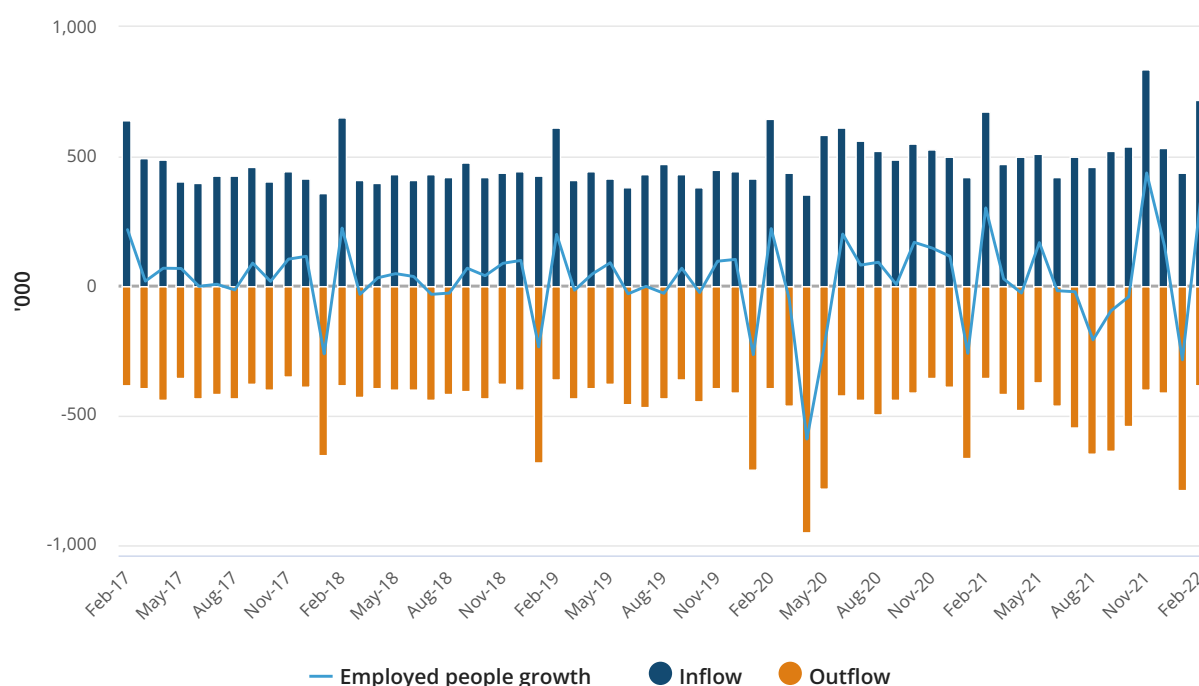
- employment increased by 77,400 people (0.6%) to 13,372,000 people.
- employment was 376,500 people (2.9%) higher than March 2020.

Flows into and out of employment

Flows into and out of employment are extensive and are based on the net matched sample of original employment growth between two consecutive months (around 80% of the sample). The (net) sum of the inflows and outflows does not necessarily equal the 'net' employment growth.

For February 2022, the net change in the number of employed people is the result of around 721,000 people entered employment (i.e. they were not employed in January but were employed in February), while around 386,000 people left employment (i.e. they were employed in January but were not employed in February). This contrasts with January 2022 where around 437,000 people entered employment and around 786,000 people left employment.

Monthly inflows, outflows and employment growth, Original



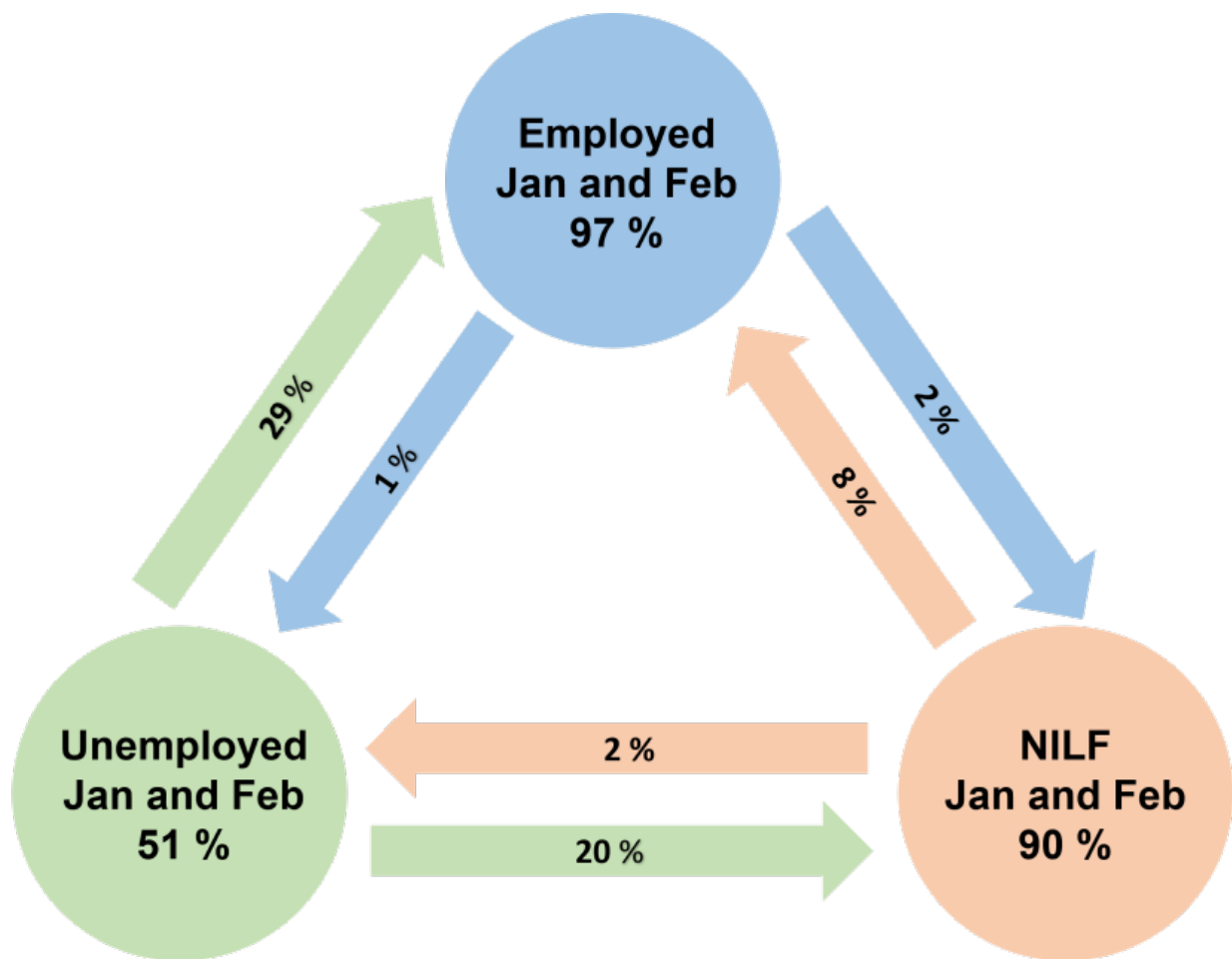
Note: As the inflows and outflows analysis is based on the matched sample (around 80% of the sample), and the original employment growth is based on the entire sample and the latest months weight, the (net) sum of the inflows and outflows does not necessarily equal the 'net' employment growth.

The following diagram shows the proportion of people moving between employment, unemployment and not in the labour force between January 2022 and February 2022 (based on the matched sample). It shows that:

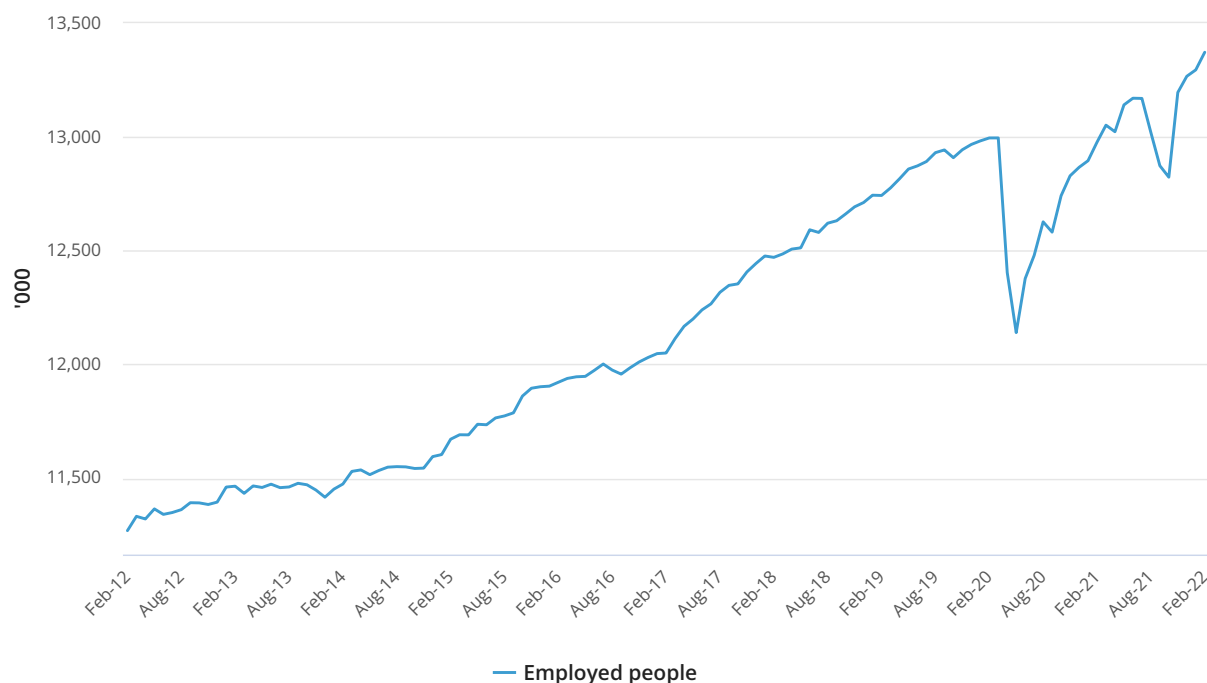
- 97% of people employed in January were also employed in February (with 1% moving to unemployment and 2% to not in the labour force).

- 51% of people unemployed in January were also unemployed in February (with 29% moving to employment and 20% to not in the labour force).
- 90% of people not in the labour force in January were also not in the labour force in February (with 8% moving to employment and 2% to unemployment).

Flows in labour force status, January to February



Employed people, Seasonally adjusted



Full-time and part-time employment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022:

- full-time employment increased by 121,900 to 9,228,000 people, and part-time employment decreased by 44,500 to 4,144,000 people.
- part-time share of employment was 31.0%, 0.8 pts lower than in March 2020.

Employment-to-population ratio

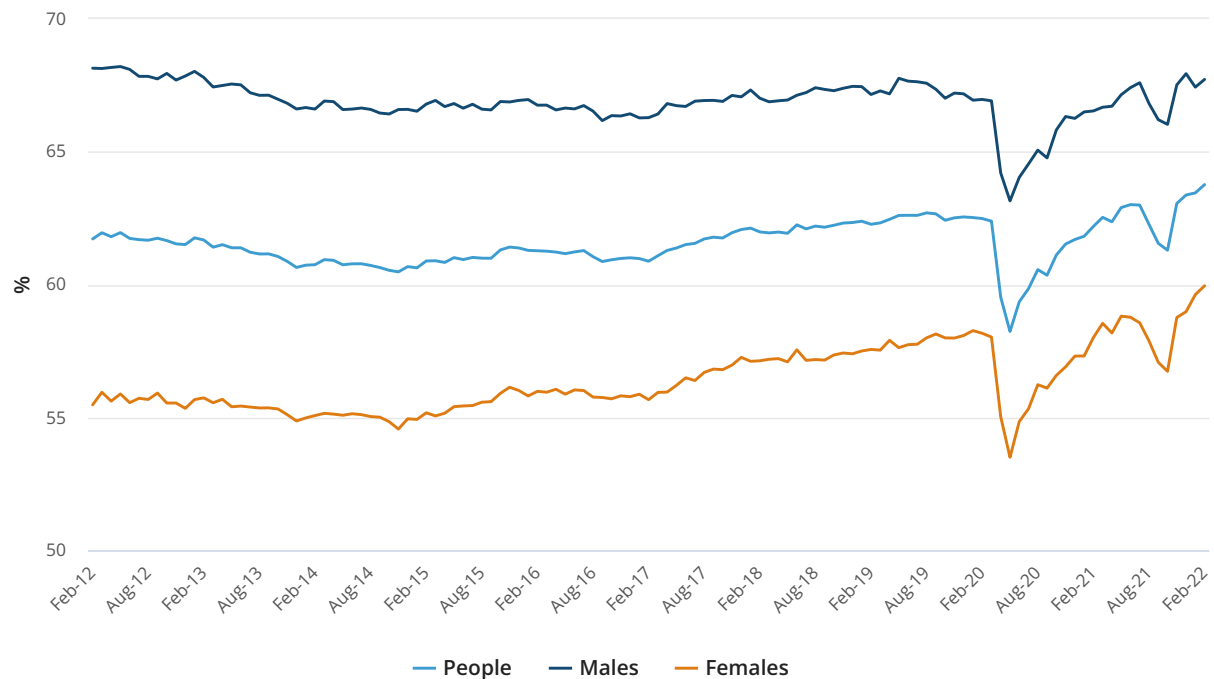
In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022, the employment-to-population ratio:

- increased by 0.3 pts to 63.8%.
- higher than March 2020 by 1.4 pts.

The employment-to-population ratio provides a measure of employment relative to the size

of the population.

Employment-to-population ratio, Seasonally adjusted



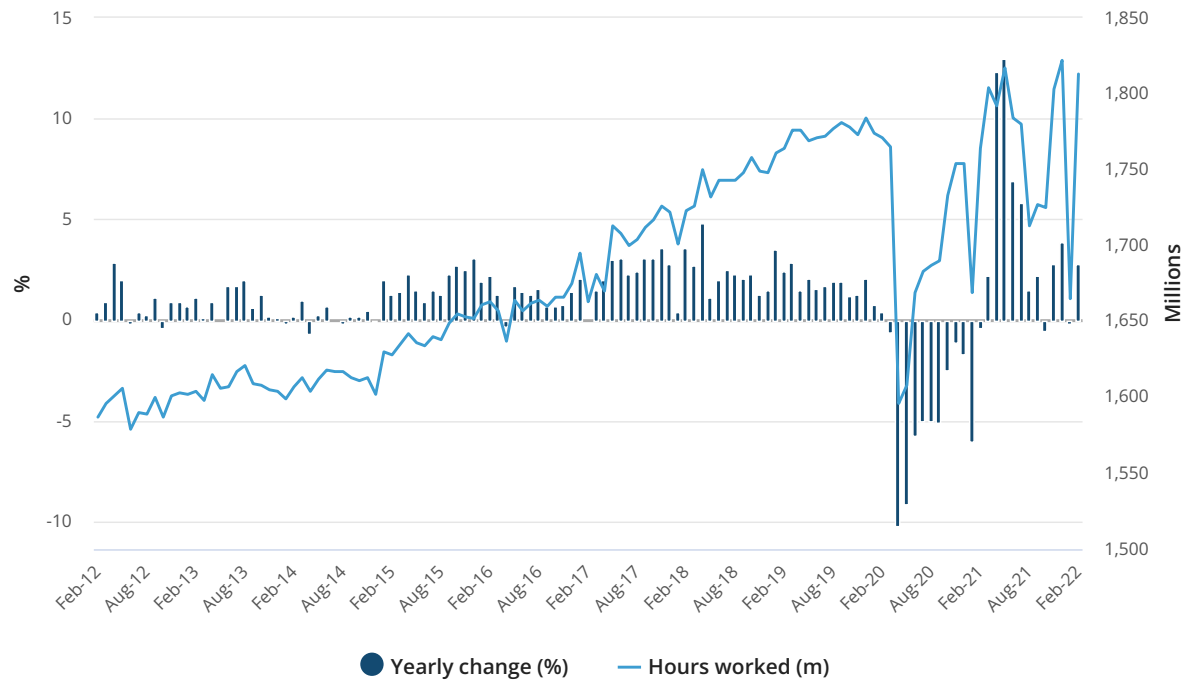
Hours worked

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022, monthly hours worked in all jobs:

- increased by 148.7 million hours (8.9%) to 1,813 million hours.
- increased by 48.4 million hours (2.7%) from March 2020.

See the article [Insights into hours worked \(/articles/insights-hours-worked-february-2022\)](/articles/insights-hours-worked-february-2022) for more.

Monthly hours worked in all jobs, Seasonally adjusted

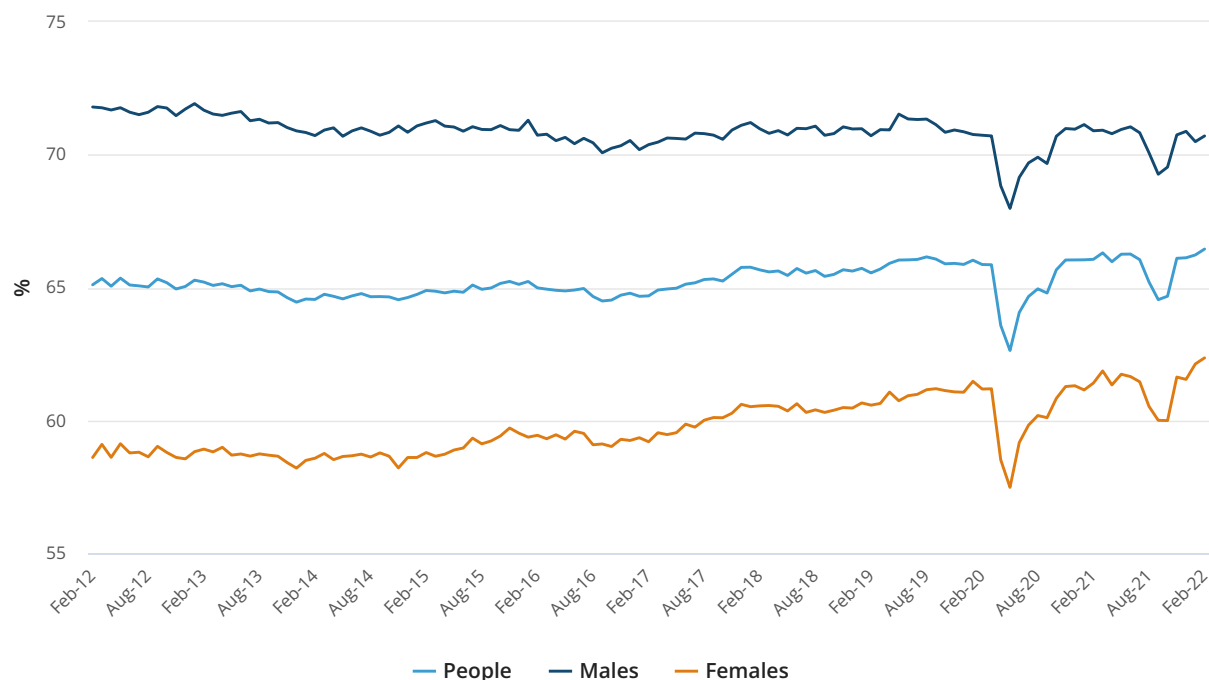


Participation

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022, the participation rate:

- increased by 0.2 pts to 66.4%.
- increased by 0.2 pts for men to 70.7% and increased by 0.2 pts to 62.4% for women.
- higher than March 2020 by 0.6 pts.

Participation rate, Seasonally adjusted

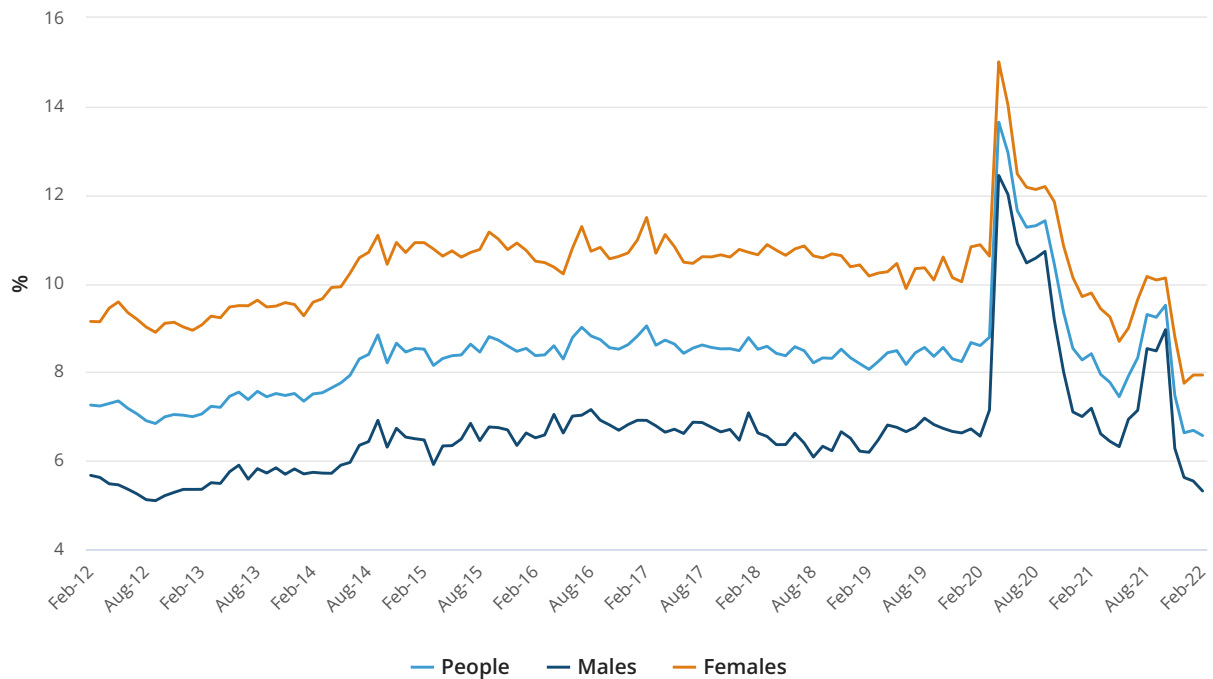


Underemployment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2022:

- underemployment rate decreased by 0.1 pts to 6.6%.
- underemployment rate was 2.2 pts lower than March 2020.
- underutilisation rate decreased by 0.3 pts to 10.6%.

Underemployment rate, Seasonally adjusted



States and Territories

February 2022, Seasonally adjusted

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory
Employed people	4,215,300	3,484,000	2,712,400	880,200	1,456,500	265,600	
Employed people - monthly change	1.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	2.4%	
Employment to population ratio	63.0%	64.3%	63.9%	60.2%	67.1%	59.1%	
Employment to population ratio - monthly change	0.8 pts	0.3 pts	0.2 pts	0.2 pts	-0.1 pts	1.3 pts	

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	North Territory
Unemployment rate	3.7%	4.2%	4.3%	5.0%	4.1%	3.9%	
Unemployment rate - monthly change	-0.5 pts	0.1 pts	-0.1 pts	0.2 pts	0.4 pts	0.1 pts	
Underemployment rate	6.4%	6.1%	7.3%	7.5%	6.8%	8.1%	
Underemployment rate - monthly change	0.0 pts	0.0 pts	0.1 pts	-0.5 pts	-0.4 pts	0.2 pts	
Participation rate	65.4%	67.1%	66.7%	63.4%	70.0%	61.5%	
Participation rate - monthly change	0.5 pts	0.4 pts	0.2 pts	0.4 pts	0.2 pts	1.4 pts	

Rotation group analysis

Sample composition and rotation

The Labour Force Survey sample can be thought of as comprising eight sub-samples (rotation groups), with each sub-sample remaining in the survey for eight months, and one group "rotating out" each month and being replaced by a new group "rotating in". As seven-eighths of the sample are common from one month to the next, changes in the estimates reflect real changes in the labour market, rather than changes in the sample. The replacement sample is generally selected from the same geographic areas as the outgoing one, as part of a representative sampling approach.

The sample comprises three components:

- the matched common sample (people who responded in both the current month and previous month)
- the unmatched common sample (people who responded in the current month but who did not respond in the previous month, or vice versa)
- the incoming rotation group (replacing people who rotated out)

The matched common sample describes the change observed for the same respondents in the current and previous month, while the other two components reflect differences between the aggregate labour force status of different groups of people.

While the rotation groups are designed to be representative of the population, the outgoing

and incoming rotation groups will almost always have somewhat different characteristics, as they reflect different households and people. The design of the survey, including the weighting and estimation processes, ensures that these differences are generally relatively minor and do not affect the representativeness of the survey and its estimates. Monthly estimates are designed to be representative, regardless of the relative contribution of the three components of the sample.

The contributions of the three sample components to the original estimates of employed, unemployed and not in the labour force are in the Contribution from sample components to estimates spreadsheet.

Estimates for the incoming and outgoing rotation groups

Incoming and outgoing rotation groups

	January outgoing rotation group	February incoming rotation group	February outgoing rotation group	February estimate (Original)
Employment to population ratio	62.7%	64.2%	62.6%	64.1%
Full-time employment to population ratio	43.2%	44.7%	43.6%	44.6%
Unemployment rate	4.1%	5.0%	4.3%	4.3%
Participation rate	65.3%	67.6%	65.4%	67.0%

States and territories

In addition to analysis across the entire sample, the ABS also undertakes similar analysis for the responding sample in each state and territory each month, and highlights where there is a notable change for users to be aware of. For example, in December 2021, the incoming rotation groups in New South Wales and Victoria had a higher employment-to-population ratio and population share than the groups they replaced. These ratios of the incoming rotation groups in New South Wales and Victoria were also higher than most other rotation groups. As with any notable month-to-month movement of this nature in state and territory estimates, the ABS recommends exercising a degree of caution in interpreting short-term changes.

As for its reporting for the entire sample, where the ABS has not highlighted a notable incoming rotation group effect, any larger changes should therefore be considered to reflect

a broader change across the sample.

Managing COVID-19 impacts on incoming rotation groups

In response to COVID-19 and the suspension of face-to-face interviewing, the ABS increased the size of sample for the incoming rotation groups from June to December 2020 to ensure response level were around the same as pre-COVID-19 rotation groups. This ensured a comparable number of fully responding households to the pre-COVID period.

In response to the data collection challenges associated with the COVID-19 Delta variant, the ABS increased the size of the sample for the incoming rotation group in New South Wales in September 2021, and in New South Wales and Victoria from October 2021 to January 2022. As with earlier in the pandemic, this has ensured that survey response has remained at a similar level to the pre-COVID period.

The sample size of the incoming rotation group for February 2022 was similar to the rotation groups of the pre-COVID period.

Between April and September 2020, and in September and October 2021, additional weighting treatments were used to effectively account for a slightly higher level of non-response related to lockdowns and other restrictions. No such treatment has been required since October 2021.

Comparability with seasonally adjusted data

The gross flows and rotation group data are in original terms only, and are included to provide additional information on the month-to-month movements. They have a considerable level of inherent sampling variability, which is specifically adjusted for in the seasonally adjusted series.

While trend data usually provides the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market, in times of large changes in the labour market, seasonally adjusted data provides a better estimate of the most recent months. The ABS has temporarily suspended the trend series until labour market indicators become more stable, see [Suspension of trend series and changes to seasonal adjustment during the COVID-19 period \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2020#covid-19-impacts-and-changes\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2020#covid-19-impacts-and-changes).

Contribution from sample components to estimates

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[42.93 KB]

Data downloads

Labour Force Survey results are released in three stages.

1. Spreadsheets of the headline indicators are published in this release
2. Additional, more detailed spreadsheets and pivot tables are published in [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release) one week after this first release
3. Longitudinal labour force microdata are released in the ABS DataLab on a monthly basis, one day after the detailed release (see [Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia))

See the [Survey output \(/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/feb-2022#survey-output\)](/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/feb-2022#survey-output) section of Labour Force, Australia methodology for more information.

Labour Force status

Table 1. Labour force status by Sex, Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[977.32 KB]

Table 4. Labour force status by Sex, New South Wales - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[682.55 KB]

Table 5. Labour force status by Sex, Victoria - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[682.55 KB]

Table 6. Labour force status by Sex, Queensland - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[684.73 KB]

Table 7. Labour force status by Sex, South Australia - Trend, Seasonally

adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[681.03 KB]

Table 8. Labour force status by Sex, Western Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[683.1 KB]

Table 9. Labour force status by Sex, Tasmania - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[687.3 KB]

Table 10. Labour force status by Sex, Northern Territory - Trend and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[633.36 KB]

Table 10a. Labour force status by Sex, Northern Territory - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[159.8 KB]

Table 11. Labour force status by Sex, Australian Capital Territory - Trend and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[586.39 KB]

Table 11a. Labour force status by Sex, Australian Capital Territory - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[159.64 KB]

Table 12. Labour force status by Sex, State and Territory - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[5.86 MB]

Table 12a. Labour force status by Sex, Territory - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[272.55 KB]

Table 13. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)
[965.96 KB]

Table 15. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Educational attendance (full-time) and Sex

[!\[\]\(cead67df4d82d6c83effe4f8699a7d8f_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[756.24 KB\]](#)

Table 16. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by State, Territory and Educational attendance (full-time)

[!\[\]\(c507f772dba2b921f86777f01218e570_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[2.31 MB\]](#)

Table 17. Labour force status for 15-19 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[!\[\]\(cbe80b694ebd74fcfe136a095b608235_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[792.22 KB\]](#)

Table 18. Labour force status for 15-64 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[!\[\]\(cbe2492b119e39e02a1dab2af4a4b296_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[972.68 KB\]](#)

Hours worked

Table 19. Monthly hours worked in all jobs by Employed full-time, part-time and Sex and by State and Territory - Trend and Seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(5361750c22c4e047a52f4eac1ec2d4cc_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[368.74 KB\]](#)

Table 19a. Monthly hours worked in all jobs by Employed full-time, part-time and Sex and Territory - Seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(4fe57c3593bf1b21d272ae7ac8dfaf77_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[59.88 KB\]](#)

Table 21. Quarterly hours worked in all jobs by Market and Non-market sector - Seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(b792654f2cef9719eabeb6c5be00811e_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[56.73 KB\]](#)

EM2a - Employed persons who worked fewer hours than usual by hours actually worked in all jobs and sex, January 1991 onwards (pivot table)

[!\[\]\(2bae76de5ebbd5c4d7d47162f1673734_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[20.29 MB\]](#)

EM2b - Employed persons who worked fewer hours than usual by hours actually worked in all jobs, state and territory, January 1991 onwards (pivot table)

[!\[\]\(84f47badaad7772cd95667a7c387a639_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)
[\[9.4 MB\]](#)

Underemployment and underutilisation

Table 22. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[6.58 MB]

Table 23. Underutilised persons by State and Territory and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[8.28 MB]

Table 23a. Underutilised persons by Territory and Sex - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[393.14 KB]

Table 24. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex (expanded analytical series)

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[410.02 KB]

Table 25. Underutilised persons by State, Territory and Sex (expanded analytical series)

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[340 KB]

Flows into and out of employment

GM1 - Labour force status and Gross changes (flows) by Age, Sex, State and Territory, February 1991 onwards

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[96.7 MB]

All time series spreadsheets

All time series spreadsheets

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[28.89 MB]

Data Explorer datasets

Caution: Data in the Data Explorer is currently released after the 11:30am release on the ABS website. Please check the time period when using Data Explorer.

For information on Data Explorer and how it works, see the [Data Explorer user guide \(/about/data-services/data-explorer/data-explorer-user-guide\)](#).

[Labour force status by Sex, State and Territory \(https://explore.data.abs.gov.au/vis?tm=labour%20force&pg=0&df\[ds\]=ABS_ABS_TOPICS&df\[id\]=LF&df\[ag\]=ABS&df\[vs\]=1.0.0&hc\[Measure\]=Labour%20Force&hc\[ABS%20Topics\]=LABOUR&pd=2021-01%2C&dq=M9.3.1599.30%2B10%2B20.AUS.M&ly\[cl\]=TIME_PERIOD&ly\[rw\]=TSEST\)](https://explore.data.abs.gov.au/vis?tm=labour%20force&pg=0&df[ds]=ABS_ABS_TOPICS&df[id]=LF&df[ag]=ABS&df[vs]=1.0.0&hc[Measure]=Labour%20Force&hc[ABS%20Topics]=LABOUR&pd=2021-01%2C&dq=M9.3.1599.30%2B10%2B20.AUS.M&ly[cl]=TIME_PERIOD&ly[rw]=TSEST) - Number of people employed, unemployed and not in the labour force, monthly, February 1978 and onwards

Article archive

Understanding the labour force

[Understanding full-time and part-time work \(/articles/understanding-full-time-and-part-time-work\)](#) (January 2021)

[Understanding differences between Labour Force employment statistics and Weekly Payroll jobs \(/articles/understanding-differences-between-labour-force-employment-statistics-and-weekly-payroll-jobs\)](#) (April 2020)

[Classifying people during the COVID-19 period \(https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/classifying-people-labour-force-survey-during-covid-19-period\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/classifying-people-labour-force-survey-during-covid-19-period) (March 2020)

[Labour Force Explained \(https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained) (September 2017)

[Understanding the Australian labour force using ABS statistics \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features999Dec%202013\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features999Dec%202013) (December 2013)

[Understanding full-time / part-time status in the Labour Force Survey \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Sep%202013\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Sep%202013) (September 2013)

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